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# Inside APHIS

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## APHIS Coordinates Somalia Preclearance Effort

By Ed Curlett, Public Information, LPA



APHIS PHOTO BY JIM RHINEBECK

Bob Nave (right), PPQ's Assistant Western Regional Director, and Gunner Miller, the U.S. Marine who supervised this wash point, discuss improved utilization of the wash racks.

"These are the worst conditions I've ever worked under," says Dale Rush, IS' agricultural advisor to the European Command, referring to his 4-week stint in war-torn Mogadishu, Somalia.

"There's no question that Somalia is an extremely difficult and often hazardous working environment. There's complete and total devastation in that country," he continues. "The closest thing I can compare Mogadishu to is pictures of Berlin after World War II. Every building there is destroyed by thousands of bullet holes."

It's amidst this country's squalor and wreckage that APHIS' advisors are working to ensure that U.S. troops and equipment sent to the troubled nation in December on the Restore Hope mission do not return home and start an agricultural

epidemic.

To date, the preclearance operation has gone smoothly thanks to the Military Customs Inspection (MCI) program. The program uses soldiers and marines trained by APHIS to wash and inspect cargo and equipment to eliminate soil and debris that can harbor devastating agricultural pests.

"The MCI program is invaluable to APHIS as we endeavor to protect U.S. agriculture from hitchhiking pests," says Bob Nave, PPQ's Assistant Western Regional Director who spent 30 days in Somalia.

Under Rush's supervision, the U.S. Marine Corps established an equipment wash operation in Mogadishu. "We had what you might call the biggest equipment or car wash in the country," says Nave.

As vehicles were cleaned, Nave

found it rewarding to point out to the troops any small branches, leaves, or cactus pieces with egg masses or disease that were lodged under a vehicle or trailer.

He emphasized how easily these items could grow at Fort Bliss in Texas. "These hitchhikers would only need to become dislodged on a subsequent trip during stateside maneuvers, and a new species of weed or cactus could be introduced into the United States," says Nave.

Cargo and equipment also have to be free of sand before returning to the States. "Sand can be dry, dusty, and barren," explains Nave, "but just add water, and there are more than enough weed seeds to turn the place green. Soldiers quickly realized the risk posed by sand when weeds began growing in the areas where they dumped their laundry water."

Other pest risks that troops needed to be aware of were termites and mosquitoes. "The major pest risk with cargo is subterranean termites," says Rush. These pests can infest the interiors of crates and cardboard boxes in a matter of hours. Any time we found evidence of termite infestation, the cargo had to be recleaned and repackaged."

As for mosquitoes, Nave made sure he pointed out to the troops the potential for stagnant rain water in new or used tires to become a reservoir for malaria-carrying mosquito larvae.

Making the troops understand the importance of APHIS' mission in Somalia was not always easy for Nave and Rush. "It was sometimes difficult to tell a Major, Colonel, or General how the quarantine mea-

(See SOMALIA on page 4)

# Secretarial Focus

## Achieving Your Professional Potential

By Linda Story, Program Manager, Operation Jumpstart

Whatever a secretary's responsibilities may be on a given day, whether it's routine tasks or coordinating a conference, achieving success as a secretary requires work.

Trust and mutual respect are two qualities that are especially vital to you as a secretary. In fact, being seen as trustworthy is probably one of the greatest characteristics that a secretary can have. As for mutual respect, it's an attitude that exists when all members of a team are working toward a mutual goal, and maintaining respect obliges both the secretary and his or her supervisor to contribute to the success of the other person.

The office environment of today has changed drastically, and the skills needed for today's workplace have become much more technical and specialized. Possessing the expertise and skills required to get the job done is a must.

Although developing technical skills can be a challenge, equally as

important is the ability to communicate and interact effectively. Being able to communicate clearly and concisely, whether by personal contact, telephone, or written correspondence, is a necessity for a good secretary.

More often than not, the first impression a visitor receives from an office is from the secretary. Because there is only one chance to make a good first impression, skill in this area is of the utmost importance for both the secretary and the office he or she represents.

Initiative is perhaps the characteristic most desired by management. A person who possesses initiative thinks, sees, and acts. He or she watches for potential problems and accepts the responsibility for solving them. For secretaries, staying one step ahead in a busy office is a constant challenge, but these insights may help you achieve your professional potential.

## U.S. Savings Bond Campaign Kickoff

Feel like you should be saving more? Putting a little extra away for emergencies or even just a rainy day? Now's your chance to do just that by increasing your U.S. savings bond allotment or becoming a new saver. The campaign's kickoff will be in Room 643 of the Federal Building on May 12. In attendance will be the vice chair of USDA's U.S. Savings Bond Campaign, Charles Hilty; campaign assistant Kim Graves; Acting Associate APHIS Administrator Terry L. Medley; and Ralph Johnson from the Savings Bond Division of the Department of the Treasury.

According to Bob O'Brien, coordinator of APHIS' savings bond campaign and program analyst with PPD, this year he hopes to see a 10-percent increase in the number of new savers over last year's campaign. O'Brien also hopes that one of every five employees currently buying bonds will increase their level of investment.

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

I read with great interest the March/April issue of *Inside APHIS*. It makes one feel sincerely proud to see how far APHIS has progressed since 1972.

During the 1970's, one proud accomplishment was the recognition APHIS received for its commitment to equal employment opportunity both within USDA and the Government. Surely the celebration described in this issue indicates the spirit carries on. The greatest natural resource we have on this earth is the brainpower of people, regardless of their origin. The challenge to our leaders is to create an environment where we can all benefit from it. We still have a long way to go, but "where there's a will, there's a way."

Because APHIS Administrators have been primarily animal oriented

since the agency's inception, I always felt they needed to be extra-sensitive to those in APHIS with other backgrounds. Therefore, I got a good feeling reading about Glen Lee and Don Thompson's work and the accomplishments of PPQ. Believe me, APHIS has been blessed with good and competent people.

As for Charlie Dents, he and I go back to the 1950's, eradicating foot-and-mouth disease in Mexico together. There, we learned that if we could eradicate that disease under those circumstances, we could take on any other challenges. I was pleased to read that he is still demonstrating that it can be done and continues to show the way.

Keep up the good work, APHIS!

Frank J. Mulhern  
(APHIS Administrator 1971-80)

## Inside APHIS

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# 1993 APHIS Summer Interns

The final list is in! According to APHIS Program Manager of Student and Recruitment Programs Carolyn Gethers, more than 40 college students from across the country will be working at various APHIS locations this summer.

Program	Students	College	Position	Location
<b>Veterinary Services</b>	Sharon White	North Carolina State	Animal Health Aide	Lumberton, NC
	Starlin Jones	North Carolina A&T	Animal Health Aide	Harrisburg, PA
	Terry Scott	Tuskegee University	Animal Health Aide	VA
	Bonnie Gilbert	Mississippi State	Animal Health Aide	Jackson, MS
	Oreta Samples	Fort Valley State	Animal Health Aide	Conyers, GA
	Jeannie Beavers	North Carolina State	Animal Health Tech.	Greensboro, NC
	Nancy Pugh	Cornell University	Animal Health Tech.	Conyers, GA
	Robin White	Tuskegee University	Animal Health Tech.	Hyattsville, MD
	Jose Trujillo	University of Missouri	Animal Health Tech.	Juncos, PR
	Luis Buitrago	Tuskegee University	Animal Health Tech.	Arecibo, PR
	Elizabeth Carver	Colorado State	Animal Health Tech.	Ames, IA
	Daniel Buckhaus	Iowa State	Animal Health Tech.	Ames, IA
	Kelly Pope	Oklahoma State	Animal Health Tech.	Indianapolis, IN
	Karen Clingerman,	Virginia/Maryland Reg.	Animal Health Tech.	Hyattsville, MD
	Brenda Santana	Tuskegee University	Animal Health Tech.	Hyattsville, MD
	Karen Jordan	Tuskegee University	Animal Health Tech.	Hyattsville, MD
	Margaret Powell	Michigan State	Animal Health Tech.	Hyattsville, MD
	Jan Curtis	Washington State	Animal Health Tech.	Hyattsville, MD
	Michael Norton	Colorado State	Animal Health Tech.	Fort Collins, CO
	Michael Paoletti	Tuskegee University	Animal Health Tech.	Fort Collins, CO
	Sharon Hoff	Michigan State	Animal Health Tech.	Hyattsville, MD
<b>Plant Protection and Quarantine</b>	Lori Clark	University of Southern FL	Biological Lab Tech.	Summerdale, PA
	Marcus Sonnier	Southern University	Management Asst.	Gainesville, FL
	Kimberly Strasser	Rutgers	Physical Science Aide	Hoboken, NJ
<b>Management and Budget</b>	Wanda Fletcher	Alcorn State University	PPQ Aide	Dallas/Fort Worth, TX
	Marshall Reedem	Prairie View A&M	PPQ Aide	Dallas/Fort Worth, TX
	Jeanne Kelly	Catonsville Community	Computer Aide	Hyattsville, MD
<b>Biotechnology, Biologics, and Environmental Protection</b>	Lilly Giannini	University of Maryland-College Park	Computer Aide	Hyattsville, MD
	Edward Archuleta	New Mexico Highlands	Management Asst.	Washington, DC
	Monique Stubbs	Towson State	Financial Asst.	Hyattsville, MD
	Richard Miller	Catonsville Community	Management Asst.	Hyattsville, MD
	Melanie Brown	University of Maryland-College Park	Program Asst.	Hyattsville, MD
	Pauline Harris	Grambling State	Library Asst.	Hyattsville, MD
	Louis Hanigan	Tuskegee University	Physical Science Aide	Gulfport, MS
<b>Human Resources</b>	Justin Thomas	Southern Mississippi	Physical Science Aide	Gulfport, MS
	Andrea Cole	Alcorn State	Physical Science Aide	Gulfport, MS
	Brian Graham	Howard University	Management Asst.	Washington, DC
<b>Recruitment and Development</b>	Monique McCullough	Clark Atlanta University	Management Asst.	Hyattsville, MD
<b>Management Services Division</b>	Dyane Jones	Bowie State	Management Asst.	Washington, DC
	Timothy Nichols	West Virginia	Management Asst.	Hyattsville, MD
<b>Policy and Program Development</b>	Sheri Ndang	Southern University	Policy Analyst	Hyattsville, MD
<b>Legislative and Public Affairs</b>	John Bau	Univ. of North Carolina-Greensboro	Public Affairs Asst.	Hyattsville, MD
<b>International Services</b>	William Mitchell	Tuskegee University	Project Aide	Hyattsville, MD
<b>Animal Damage Control</b>	Todd Menke	University of Nebraska	Biological Aide	Raleigh, NC

## Somalia from page 1

asures should be carried out without being resented," says Nave.

However, Nave found the military personnel he dealt with to be very cooperative and dedicated to preventing the movement of pests and diseases. He had a Captain specifically point out a large, mean-looking Sphinx moth that had the troops excited. This moth was about 2 1/2 inches long. Although the moth is not a serious agricultural pest, the troops were concerned about keeping it out of their gear and personal effects.

Nave also made a special effort to call upon Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnson in the American Embassy to explain APHIS' mission in Somalia and emphasize the excellent job the troops were doing in meeting USDA cleanliness standards. During their meeting, Nave told the Lieutenant General that, while the sun-dried fruit he and many of the Joint Task Force members had been given could be eaten in Somalia, it couldn't be taken back to the United States because of the threat of Khapra beetles.

Two days after this meeting a pest-risk briefing was given to the troops per the Lieutenant General's direction that was aimed at reinforcing much of what he and Nave discussed.



APHIS PHOTO BY BOB NAVE

**Two military customs inspectors at a port-washing operation prepare to inspect washed vehicles for any plants, plant products, or pests that could be harmful to U.S. agriculture.**

In addition to cargo and equipment, U.S. military personnel and their belongings must be thoroughly inspected before returning to the States. "Many troops wanted to take souvenirs, including drums, war shields, and other artifacts, constructed of dried animal skins that can harbor animal diseases," says Rush. "To prevent the troops from wasting their money on such prohibited items, we had vendors remove the items from the military facilities," adds Nave.

Although the basic preclearance procedures being used in Somalia

are similar to those used in Desert Storm, Rush and Nave agree that the differences between the projects are dramatic. To start with, the size of the Somali preclearance operation is much smaller than the 1991 preclearance operation following Desert Storm. In that operation, more than 500,000 troops and their equipment were inspected and cleared to return to the States, compared with 26,000 troops for Restore Hope.

Probably the most obvious difference, especially to Rush and Nave, is the fact that the actual fighting was over during Desert Storm's preclearance operation whereas the fighting continues in Somalia.

Gunfire was common when both Nave and Rush were in Somalia. "Sporadic warfare between rival clans continued despite the presence of coalition forces," says Rush. "Sniping at U.S. forces bivouacked at the Embassy compound, Somali University, and Soccer Stadium was common at night." As for Nave, he once spent 2 days confined within the Embassy compound because of gunfire.

Rush and Nave also encountered dangers in the Somali streets. "When not throwing rocks, Somali youths endeavored to steal what they could from moving vehicles—weapons, equipment, meals, or anything loose and unprotected," recalls Rush. "Everyone carried sticks or batons to keep the Somalis away from the vehicles."

Other less risky hazards that had to be dealt with were camel spiders, scorpions, and giant ants. "Ants often found their way inside cloth-



APHIS PHOTO BY JIM RHINEBECK

**Bob Nave and Gunner Miller survey the area where Marines clean their unit equipment. After the equipment is cleaned and inspected, it is boxed, sealed, and loaded in a vehicle for shipment back to the United States.**

ing, which caused the victim to perform an entertaining dance," says Rush.

"Though it's not exactly clear when all the U.S. troops in Somalia will return, one thing's for certain. When they do, you can rest assured that American agriculture will be safe," says Rush.

**According to Bob Nave, this run-down garden setting in the American Embassy compound was to become a bedroom for some U.S. troops.**



APHIS PHOTO BY BOB NAVE

## User Fees Are Being Assessed But Are They Being Collected?

It is estimated that 246,000 international commercial aircraft are cleared by PPQ personnel every year—not to mention the estimated 29,700 domestic commercial aircraft. On top of that, approximately 30 million passengers travel internationally every year. Any way you look at it, PPQ has its hands full ensuring these aircraft and passengers do not introduce harmful pests or diseases that could impact U.S. agriculture.

To cover the cost of agricultural quarantine inspection (AQI) services, PPQ began collecting user fees from passengers traveling internationally on May 13, 1991, and from international commercial aircraft on February 9, 1992. The Field Servicing Office's (FSO) User Fee and Debt Analysis section, the Budget and Accounting Division's (BAD) User Fee Branch and Resource Management Systems and Evaluation staff have been working closely with PPQ to coordinate the implementation and collection of the user fees.

Currently, airlines are assessed \$61.00 for each international flight

and passengers \$1.45. The passenger fees are collected by airlines as part of the ticket price and must be remitted for deposit into a specified account in the Department of the Treasury within 31 days after the end of each calendar quarter.

How does APHIS keep track of the fees owed by the airlines? Surprisingly, there are no bills issued to the airlines indicating fees owed. "The airlines are pretty much on an honor system," says John Calder, Manager of the User Fee and Debt Analysis section. "They are supposed to remit the fees once a quarter to USDA's National Finance Center," he continues. "We go through various sources, such as Aviation Daily, to determine the number of international flights an airline may have had. For the most part, the airlines realize that if they fail to pay the user fees, they may be subject to various penalties and even law suits."

According to Calder, the airlines appear to be paying up—though a little late sometimes. Recently, the User Fee and Debt Analysis section has been collecting large sums of outstanding AQI user fees on a weekly basis from various airlines—\$226,441.55 was collected in

aircraft clearance and international passenger debts for the week ending March 5 and \$48,222.75 for the week of March 19.

In addition, M&B's Resource Management Systems and Evaluation Staff has been conducting audits of various airlines and has identified \$3,755,976 in outstanding fees yet to be collected. "We recognize that many airlines are experiencing financial difficulties as of late," says Calder, "and we are willing to work with many of them to develop a suitable payment schedule for the user fees."

"Not to be forgotten," adds Calder, "are the VS user fees collected for endorsing export health certificates, quarantining animals and birds in APHIS import centers, and providing services at privately-owned, permanent and temporary quarantine facilities. In fiscal year 1992, more than \$3 million was collected for these services."

As for methods FSO uses to ensure user fees are paid, "like most collection agencies," says Calder, "we use whatever works."

## Self-directed Work Teams—the Wave of the Future?



APHIS PHOTO BY RUDY CASTANEDA

Self-directed team members at Miami International Airport's concourse E gather for a staff meeting. Members include: (from left to right) Douglas Root, Carol Muraoka, Felix Banuchi, Aida DeLaCruz, Sonia Hernandez, Ernesto DeLaCruz, Hugh Jones, Joseph Simmons, Fernando Lenis, Thomas Skarlinsky, and Rodolfo Castaneda.

The idea started in Sweden in the 1960's, when Volvo factories set about reinventing the assembly line. Rather than have their employees think of themselves as merely cogs in an intricate machine churning out finished products, the company decided to initiate what is known today as self-directed or self-managed work teams.

Under this system, employees were organized in groups to accomplish specific tasks, such as building the front or back end of the car or installing the engine. In order to effectively carry out their new responsibilities, the employees had to decide and agree upon how best to go about their tasks. In short, they had to work as a team. Not surprisingly, the system resulted in a new sense of teamwork, commitment, and empowerment in the employees, not to mention increased productivity.

Here in the United States, the use of self-directed work teams has spread from product-manufacturing industries to professional, white-collar jobs with just as much success. Anxious to experiment with self-directed work teams themselves, PPQ's agricultural quarantine inspection (AQI) staff at the port of Miami volunteered for a pilot project.

"Our port was ideal for such a pilot," says Miami's officer in charge Jerry Russo enthusiastically. "Our managers and employees here are very progressive and receptive to new ideas. We felt the program could be very beneficial."

With the actual implementation of the pilot program in April 1991, PPQ became one of the first programs in the Department of Agriculture and one of the first in the Federal Government to try the concept.

"Self-directed work teams have been proving their effectiveness in the private sector for three decades," says Charlotte Travieso, an organization development consultant with HRD who worked to help inaugurate the PPQ pilot. "But, the public sector has been slow to initiate them, perhaps because of the more restrictive Government guidelines on hiring, firing, promoting, and even conducting performance evaluations."

### A Team Concept

So, what exactly is a self-directed work team? Basically, it's a system in which highly trained groups of employees share the responsibility for performing a service or producing a product. Although the teams are called self-directed or self-

managed, they are not totally without leadership or control. A mentor or coach outside of the team is responsible for steering the team and providing direction. The purpose of this setup is to allow the employees to work out problems among themselves and consult the mentor or coach only as a last resort.

"Actually, it's a concept of trusting groups to direct themselves while freeing their restraints and creativity," says Dan Stone, Chief of HRD's Organization Development staff. "We've discovered that employees on the teams value their new sense of empowerment and the freedom to manage their own worklife."

PPQ officials stationed at airports or ports-of-entry have their hands full ensuring that pests and diseases that could be harmful to U.S. agriculture are not introduced via traveling passengers. Members of the self-directed work team stationed at concourse E in Miami International Airport are no excep-

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*"Actually, it's a concept of trusting groups to direct themselves while freeing their restraints and creativity," says Dan Stone.*

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tion. Currently, concourse E receives 75-80 percent of the airport's workload.

In addition to this heavy traffic, team members also have to deal with late plane arrivals, unpredictable overtime schedules, passengers who do not understand the language or the regulations, and vacationers who do understand the regulations but are determined to bring back some agricultural souvenirs.

To ensure the busy concourse was sufficiently staffed, team members decided to implement morning and afternoon teams in which members continually rotate their responsibilities. This way, each officer on the team is able to take a turn screening passengers, monitoring the x-ray machines, and tagging baggage.

Usual responsibilities aside,

being a member of a self-directed work team means assuming additional responsibility. In fact, team members at concourse E are now responsible for, among other things, organizing their own work, setting their own priorities, conducting their own planning, coordinating with others, evaluating their own progress, and taking corrective action. And, as this project revealed, the teams ultimately take on many of the responsibilities previously reserved for supervisors, such as solving problems, scheduling work, and in some cases, even handling personnel issues like absenteeism or selection and evaluation of team members.

### Learning the Basics

With all of the interaction and cooperation required of self-directed teams, it's easy to understand why these employees must be proficient in communication, team building, and interpersonal skills.

"We made sure that all members of the self-directed work teams and their first-line supervisors received training in the self-directed work team concept and their roles and responsibilities," says Travieso. "Selected team members received training from Zenger Miller in interpersonal communication, giving and receiving feedback, running a meeting, problem solving, action planning, and dealing with discipline problems and problem employees. Then, the supervisors were trained in how to move from supervising and directing to facilitating and coaching."

"Since implementing the work teams, we've noticed that employees have become more open about sharing ideas and creating their own set of norms," says PPQ officer Fernando Lenis. "They are also willing to broach problems more openly and are no longer afraid to speak their minds," adds Rudy Castaneda another PPQ officer who works with the teams.

Russo agrees that they have made great progress since the program's beginning but feels they could have used even more direction and training. "Although the training we've received has been helpful," he says, "for the most part, we've had to learn by our mistakes. If something didn't work, we would just try something else. We've been

lucky so far because we've managed to resolve most of the problems ourselves."

### Producing Committed Team Members

Perhaps one of the reasons this pilot project is working so well is the sense of commitment and devotion that has evolved in most of the team members. "We have found that team members are much more dedicated and devoted to their jobs," says PPQ supervisory officer Tom Billak. "They now tend to view PPQ's mission of protecting U.S. agriculture as a team mission." "More importantly," adds Castaneda, "when team members

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*"We have found that team members are much more dedicated and devoted to their jobs," says Tom Billak.*

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notice gaps in the inspection process, they now willingly volunteer to fill the gaps to ensure a high level of protection is always maintained."

Such commitment has not gone unnoticed by Travieso and HRD. "We've observed that, in addition to improved morale and job satisfaction, the team employees have also indicated an improved perception of their supervisors and a more positive outlook toward PPQ as an employer," she says. "They have developed a new sense of enthusiasm, feel more respected, see that their ideas and opinions are encouraged and implemented, and feel that their professionalism has been enhanced."

The pilot project's success has prompted employees from other ports who are interested in initiating their own self-directed work teams to question Russo about Miami's program. "There are two things I tell them that must happen for self-directed work teams to be successful," he says. "Managers and employees at the ports must be progressive thinkers, and there must be sufficient resources to support the project because of the need for continual training. We've been fortunate in that respect," he continues, "Glen Lee has been very supportive of the program."

### A Few Snags

While the impact of self-directed  
(See **WORK TEAMS** on page 8)



APHIS PHOTO BY RUDY CASTANEDA

Self-directed work team members Sonia Hernandez (left) and Felix Banuchi examine passengers' baggage for prohibited agricultural products.

## Work teams from page 7



APHIS PHOTO BY RUDY CASTANEDA

**Team members Thomas Skarlinsky (left) and Hugh Jones.**

work teams on employee morale and commitment to the job has been dramatic, the teams' effect on productivity has been mixed. "Productivity in regard to AQI operations can be measured in a number of ways," says Travieso. "You can look at either the civil penalties assessed to passengers or the number of interceptions and seizures of quarantine material. Evaluations of the project indicate that, although civil penalties assessed by the work teams increased significantly at the port, initially, there was a slight decrease in the number of interceptions and seizures made by the teams." This fact raises questions about another issue—employee performance.

Russo acknowledges that the issue of performance evaluations will definitely need to be addressed in the future. "Previously, a PPQ officer's performance was rated based on the number of individual interceptions he or she made," he says. "But, under this project, team members can no longer focus on individual achievement; they must operate under the assumption of what's best for the group." Travieso agrees that this issue is one that will have to be dealt with and thinks that the solution may lie in adding an element to the standards of employees in work teams that reflects their team skills.

Questions regarding job classification, the role of supervisors, and peer evaluation in self-directed work teams have also come up. Should supervisory functions be transferred to team members? Should supervisors of the work teams be classified as facilitators or mentors? Should employees be allowed to evaluate,

discipline, and even give awards to each other? These are only some of the questions that Travieso feels will need to be addressed if more projects such as this are to be initiated in APHIS.

### **Human Resources Operations Incorporates the Team Approach**

Though not as publicized as PPQ's project, the Human Resources Division's Human Resources Operations (HRO) unit initiated a self-directed, or self-managed as they like to refer to it, work team project of their own in January 1991. In fact, HRO was the first administrative organization in either the private or public sector to implement work teams throughout its entire operation. According to HRO Chief Diane McBride-Thompson, the project has been very successful.

"HRO was initially set up with traditional units organized around job functions, such as classification, employment, and processing," she says. "However, there were organizational barriers and an overall lack of communication between the staffs. A project would come into the classification unit that was hot or important, and, by the time it

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*"They see the current one-stop-shopping approach as a tremendous improvement over the traditional organization," says Diane McBride-Thompson.*

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reached the processing unit, it was no longer handled with such importance. Basically, the system would break down."

Despite these internal problems, HRO continued to receive frequent customer praise and recognition. But, in order to provide even better service to their 13,000 APHIS and partner-agency customers, HRO opted to convert its entire organization into self-managed teams in September 1992. This decision was made based on the successful implementation of two pilot self-

managed teams in May 1991 and February 1992.

According to McBride-Thompson, the teams were set up to be multi-functional yet independently serve specific clients. This arrangement reduced the number of HRO supervisors from eight to three, creating a much flatter structure. Currently, the ratio of supervisors to employees at HRO is 1:23.

"Our office was ideal for this type of project," she says. "Now, team members are physically located near each other and are easily able to discuss ongoing projects. The new team approach enhances communication, speeds work processes, and reduces the opportunity for things to get off track. We have gotten some very positive feedback from our customers since implementing self-managed work teams," continues McBride-Thompson. "They see the current one-stop-shopping approach as a tremendous improvement over the traditional organization."

### **Comparing Notes**

As with PPQ's project, HRO employees received intensive training from several sources, including Zenger Miller, in communication skills, group action skills, and decisionmaking. "We were fortunate in our training," says McBride-Thompson. "We are a customer-service-oriented office, so most employees already possessed people and communication skills. The training just served to enhance and reestablish those skills. Charlotte [Travieso], our facilitator, has been a great asset too. We have received a lot of support from her and HRD."

Similarities between the PPQ and HRO projects are apparent. Employee morale and support have increased at HRO like they did within the PPQ team in Miami, but worker productivity there has remained the same or improved only slightly during the startup phase. HRO expects that both the quality of work and productivity will significantly improve in the near future. Performance issues and employee evaluations of peers are factors common to the two projects.

Regardless of the few snags that will need to be addressed in the projects, it certainly appears that self-directed work teams in APHIS are here to stay.

# APHIS OK's Soil for Inclusion in Holocaust Memorial Exhibit

By Catherine Morse, Executive Correspondence, LPA

There's a new museum in Washington, DC, that's sure to draw volumes of tourists and locals alike—the much-awaited and highly publicized Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Just 400 yards away from the Washington Monument on Raoul Wallenberg Place stands the memorial. It is a symbol of the American people and the U.S. Government's commitment to remember one of the darkest chapters in human history. APHIS is honored to have played a small role in the establishment of this memorial.

Soil from 39 sites, including the concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, Normandy's Omaha Beach, and the destroyed Czech village of Lidice, was recently commingled in the base of an eternal flame in the museum's Hall



PHOTO BY GLENN LEVY

**A U.S. Army color guard files past urns containing soil from 39 Holocaust and U.S. military sites as survivors, liberators, and Museum supporters stand at attention.**



PHOTO BY GLENN LEVY

**Jerry Ungar of Great Neck, NY, pours soil from Rimaliw, Ukraine, in the base of an eternal flame. Mrs. Ungar's husband, William Ungar, was born in Krasne, Ukraine, and survived the Lvov Ghetto and the Janowska concentration camp.**

of Remembrance. The flame burns in homage to the victims of Nazi tyranny.

PPQ's Port Operations Permit Unit staff issued import permits for this soil, and field offices made sure it was subjected to heat treatments to destroy any pests or diseases that could have threatened American agriculture.

In a February 22 pre-opening ceremony, soil from sections 10 and 12 of the Arlington National Cemetery—the burial ground of World War II soldiers—was added to the eternal flame's base. This soil was the last to be added to the flame.

At the ceremony, Harvey M. Meyerhoff, chairman of the U. S. Holocaust Memorial Council, told a

180-person audience that "the Hall of Remembrance is not complete without the soil that we bury today. It is a sacred artifact."

Holocaust survivors and U.S. Army liberators from across the country joined together to present the soil for inclusion in the memorial and remember friends, family, and comrades lost during the Holocaust.

The Museum's three-floor, 36,000-square foot exhibition uses artifacts, oral histories, documentary film, and photographs to tell the story of Jews and other Nazi victims targeted for annihilation in systematic, State-sponsored genocide. Stories of resistance and rescue are also highlighted.

# Locust and Grasshopper Populations Plague Mexico

By Kris Long, Bureau of Land Management, Idaho State Office



APHIS PHOTO

Although Gary Cunningham, project director for APHIS' GHIPM project, readily shares his grasshoppers with employees in his office, he admits that he has a fair amount left.

On the plateau jungles of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula, swarming locusts are devouring every green thing in their path. To the west in the States of Tlaxcala and Puebla, grasshoppers are causing widespread crop damage. Mexico's choice for fighting these destructive insects has been Methyl Parathion, an effective but highly toxic insecticide. Seeking more innovative and safer control methods, Government officials there have turned to APHIS for some solutions.

At the request of Mexico's Sanidad Vegetal (Agricultural Resources, Campaign Plant Protection), Gary Cunningham, project director for PPG's Grasshopper Integrated Pest Management (GHIPM) project in Boise, Idaho, flew to Mexico in late October to tour these hard-hit areas and recommend new pest management approaches.

## Locust Infestation Leaves Path of Destruction

Merida in the eastern Yucatan Peninsula was the first of Cunningham's stops. Accompanied by Sanidad Vegetal representatives and an interpreter, he observed locust swarms of epidemic proportions. The locust infestation in

Merida appears to be at the peak of a 100-year cycle and has been so severe at times that airports have had to be closed periodically.

"The swarms I saw were rather small," says Cunningham, "perhaps 30 yards square. But one can see 20 to 30 swarms per acre, and they can go for miles and miles. It's quite a sight."

Locusts are among the most destructive of all insects. Once a plague to the Biblical Egyptians, these insects still infest agricultural areas throughout Asia and Africa. "The problem with locusts," says Cunningham, "is that they will swarm from place to place almost without warning. You don't know when they are coming, and when they do, they will eat you out of house and home."

While touring the Yucatan Peninsula, Cunningham also visited a Mennonite village in the State of Campeche that was having severe locust problems. "These villagers had carved farms in the jungle on land that was fresh and uncultivated up until the last 4 or 5 years," says Cunningham. "Unfortunately, the new crops have fallen prey to locusts. The Mennonites took us around in a horse-drawn cart to show us those areas where

the locusts had eaten everything except the corn stalks. There were no leaves, nothing. The stalks looked like large fishing poles."

## Fighting the Grasshopper Battle

Cunningham also paid a visit to Puebla and Tlaxcala to observe infestations of *Sphenarium purpurascens*, a grasshopper species that is believed to have spread from Mexico City. These insects are a new problem for the local residents, and, although some farmers are allowing the application of Methyl Parathion, others are opposed to the use of chemicals. The lack of full participation from farmers in combatting the grasshopper infestation often causes reinfestation from untreated areas to occur.

According to Cunningham, the Mexican Government is actively pursuing alternative ways to reduce grasshopper populations. One alternative being studied is a fungal organism known as *Metarhizium*. In the United States, *Beauveria*, a similar fungal organism, is being studied by GHIPM researchers and also holds promise. Because of the similarities in these two organisms, Cunningham has recommended that Mexico expand its biological control options to consider *Beauveria* along with *Metarhizium*.

## A Little Salt with Your Grasshoppers?

Another alternative being pursued by the Mexican Government is the use of grasshoppers as a food source. The idea of eating insects, while perhaps foreign to most Americans, is not new. Studies have shown that grasshoppers are high in protein, calcium, phosphorus, and niacin and are quite nutritious. In fact, these insects are eaten and relished in many parts of the world. In Asia and Africa, they are fried, roasted, or ground to be mixed with flour.

While Cunningham was in Puebla, an extension specialist from Mexico City was demonstrating grasshopper recipes learned from natives in the nearby State of Oaxaca; grasshoppers and other insects have been part of their diet since before the Spanish Conquest.

Cunningham purchased a pound of the freshly prepared Sphenarium in a Puebla market for 4,000 pesos, or about \$1.25. The recipe was simple and, according to him, complimented the insect's hearty flavor.

The natives gather grasshoppers in a sweep net and place them in water for 24 hours. After the insects are drained, they are then placed in boiling water for about 30 minutes, adding salt and garlic. Corn husks are added to give them a darker, more delicious color.

"The GHIPM project looks at everything from biologicals to decision support systems in its effort to better manage grasshoppers," says Cunningham, "but we have not yet been successful at getting the U.S. population to eat grasshoppers."

### Some Recommendations

Despite the serious insect infestations facing Mexico, the Sanidad Vegetal seldom uses aircraft or vehicles to apply pesticides. Usually, the pesticides are applied by way of backpack sprayers, and up to 50 pesticide applicators are employed by the Mexican Government year-round to fight locusts in the Yucatan Peninsula.

Based on the success of insecticide-laden baits in GHIPM project tests, Cunningham has recommended that the Mexican Government consider using such baits for locust and grasshopper control.

"In the United States," he explains, "we are encouraging the use of baits like wheat bran, flaky wheat, or rolled oats impregnated with small amounts of insecticide. You have a lot less chemical used per surface area and you get relatively good control." Cunningham believes that applying insecticide-laden baits by truck-mounted or four-wheeler spreaders would be an effective means of application and would get them away from using backpack sprayers.

Because of the Mexican Government's concern over the use of Methyl Parathion, Cunningham has also recommended the use of less potent pesticides such as Malathion and Carbaryl.

On the last day of his trip, Cunningham met with officials from

Sanidad Vegetal in Mexico City to present all of his observations and recommendations. Among other things, he recommended that the two countries continue their present communication and coordination, which could be done informally through GHIPM or formally through an organization such as the North American Plant Protection Organization—a group comprised of Federal regulatory officials from Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

He also believes the GHIPM User Handbook will be of practical value to the Mexicans in developing pest

management techniques and plans to send a copy to the Sanidad Vegetal when it's completed.

"I think the time spent in Mexico was productive," says Cunningham, "and I think officials are serious about making substantive changes. The exchange of information is also significant because it marks the beginning of the GHIPM project's ultimate goal of providing useful information about grasshopper management to the United States as well as to other countries of the world."



USDA PHOTO

The Mexican Government is pursuing alternative ways to reduce the destructive grasshopper populations wreaking havoc across the country.

# Detective Work by REAC Uncovers Dirty Dog Dealing

By Cynthia A. Eck, Public Information, LPA

Thanks to the investigative work of Regulatory Enforcement investigator Gregg G. Nelson and Veterinary Medical Officer Robert Willems in Salem, OR, a pair of kennel operators and a class B dog dealer will be serving time for conspiring to illegally obtain and sell pet dogs for medical research and for defrauding the USDA.

In February 1992, the actions of dealer Brenda Linville, from Lebanon, OR, first attracted Nelson's attention and prompted a yearlong investigation into Linville's relationship with David and Tracy Stephens, the former owners and operators of D & T Kennels.

At that time, Willems was notified by pet owner Irene Clemmer that the golden retriever and Australian shepherd she had given to Linville through a "free to a good home" advertisement were no longer in Linville's possession. When questioned, Linville denied having sold the dogs to another dealer or to a research facility and maintained she had merely given the animals away.

However, through records found at D & T Kennels during a subsequent inspection, Nelson and Willems discovered that dogs matching Clemmer's description were listed as having been sold to the kennel by another individual. The records did not indicate that Linville had been involved in this transaction. Nelson and Willems also found that the individuals listed by the kennel as selling dogs had in fact never heard of the Stephenses or of Linville.

"I contacted a woman 89 years of age who was listed in the Stephenses' records as having sold two pit bulls to the kennel," says Nelson. "This woman, like others we talked to, never sold or gave dogs to D & T Kennels or to Linville.

"We had a hard time trying to find out where the Stephenses were getting the false names and addresses they used in their records," says Nelson. "At first, we thought they were getting the information from stolen driver's licenses, but we later discovered that all of the individuals the kennel had listed as sellers had renewed their driver's licenses just 4 days prior to the date of the recorded dog sale."

Nelson followed up on this lead and contacted the Oregon Depart-



APHIS PHOTO BY GARY KISH

**Animal Care inspector Robert Willems (left) and Regulatory Enforcement investigator Gregg G. Nelson pose with Bo, a 2-year-old golden retriever that they rescued from D & T Kennels. Bo is currently working in the Pet Facilitation Therapy Program helping juvenile offenders orient themselves back into society.**

ment of Motor Vehicles' (DMV) Special Investigator's office and obtained a search warrant from the Linn County sheriff's department to inspect D & T Kennels. Not surprisingly, Oregon DMV transaction slips were found on the premises.

After the Stephenses were arrested, they revealed that Linville, who occasionally assisted her father in performing janitorial services at the Oregon DMV, would surreptitiously obtain DMV transaction slips and provide them to David Stephens. Stephens, in turn, used the names and addresses to mask the true identity of the individuals selling dogs to D & T Kennels.

Nelson and Willems' investigation further revealed that the Stephenses had falsely listed more than 60 individuals as dog owners who had sold more than 150 dogs to the kennel for resale to research facilities.

In an interview with a Portland television station, David Stephens admitted to selling 25 to 30 dogs for research each month during a 3-year period. Although he did not say how many animals were acquired illegally, Willems and Nelson estimated his 1991 earnings at approximately \$96,000.

In November 1992, the Stephenses and Linville pleaded guilty to charges of conspiring to

illegally obtain and sell pet dogs for medical research and for defrauding the USDA.

Nelson and Willems were able to save 22 dogs and 4 cats from D & T Kennels after Linville and the Stephenses were arrested. Although most of the original pet owners were never found, Sharon Harmon, director of the Oregon Humane Society, was able to place most of the animals in adopted homes.

"All of the owners I could locate told me that it was a heart-wrenching decision to give their animals away," says Nelson. "They were devastated by Linville's actions and, unfortunately, angry with themselves."

Outraged by the Stephenses' and Linville's unethical actions, more than 100 local citizens signed a petition asking Assistant U.S. Attorney John Ray in Eugene, OR, to seek the strongest possible sentences against them.

Several of the former pet owners came forward during the sentencing hearing to speak on how they were affected by the loss of their former pets. Kimberly Williams, one of the pet owners who had given two dogs to the Stephenses, told the court,

"This crime has caused me

(See DETECTIVE on page 13)

## Detective from page 12

tremendous anguish and suffering, so much that I cannot begin to describe. There isn't a day that goes by that I don't think of my dogs."

Despite the victims' touching statements in court, Linville remained unfazed and continued to claim she was blameless, telling the

former owners that they "should never have given their pets away in the first place."

On February 22, 1993, the U.S. District Court in Eugene, OR, sentenced David Stephens to 10 months in prison and 2 months of home detention. Tracy Stephens received 3 years of probation, 1 of which was to be served by home detention, and Brenda Linville

received 8 months in prison and 2 months of home detention. Charges related to Linville's unauthorized use of Oregon DMV records were dropped in exchange for a guilty plea to the charge of conspiring to defraud the USDA. David and Brenda Stephens are currently appealing their sentences.

## EXCERPT Program To Revolutionize Export Procedures

Approximately \$60 billion dollars' worth of U.S. agricultural products is exported every year, and, of this amount, PPQ officials provide phytosanitary certificates for some \$23 billion dollars' worth of plants and plant products. These items are exported from the United States to countries with varying pest and disease statuses all over the world. To prevent the products from transmitting harmful pests and diseases, importing countries require plants and plant products to meet established phytosanitary regulations before allowing them to enter.

Considering that each country has its own individual entry requirements and some 250,000 plant shipments are certified by PPQ each year, coordinating the exportation of plants and plant products requires tremendous organization.

As a service to exporters, PPQ and State agriculture officials issue Federal phytosanitary certificates which state that, to the best of their knowledge, the products being exported conform to the importing country's phytosanitary regulations.

PPQ recognizes that exporters and certifying officials need to be kept abreast of the most up-to-date phytosanitary regulations and

maintains manuals with a thorough listing of each country's entry requirements. These manuals are updated by distributing paper transmittals and phytosanitary notes to each field site. Individual field sites are responsible for keeping their own manuals updated.

Understandably, this system has become a burden to maintain, and PPQ is in the process of shifting from a paper system to an electronic data-base retrieval system.

Enter EXCERPT (Export Certification Project)—a centralized data base initiated by PPQ that will revolutionize export procedures. The program was developed under a cooperative agreement with the National Pesticide Information Retrieval System, now the Center for Environmental and Regulatory Information System, which is located at Purdue University.

The EXCERPT data base resides on a VAX 400/500 minicomputer and currently contains phytosanitary regulations for 41 countries. Among other things, the data base can help PPQ and certifying officials determine the status of approximately 2,000 endangered plant species, list a country's phytosanitary regulations, list ineligible commodities, and check for any recent changes in entry requirements.

"User feedback on EXCERPT has been extremely positive," says Abdulla Meer, EXCERPT's Project Manager in PPQ's Technical Infor-

mation Systems staff. "EXCERPT's success is a perfect example of what an agency can accomplish when all units work together in a real cooperative spirit.

PPQ's Export Certification unit, R&D's Professional Development unit, and EXCERPT's Advisory Committee—a group of field officers selected to represent users—have all worked hard and made significant contributions over the last 4 years to make EXCERPT a reality," he continues. "In addition, PPQ's management team and National Plant Boards have been extremely supportive of this project right from the beginning. Once EXCERPT is implemented, users nationwide will be able to access the system via a modem and a personal computer and retrieve any information needed to complete the certificates."

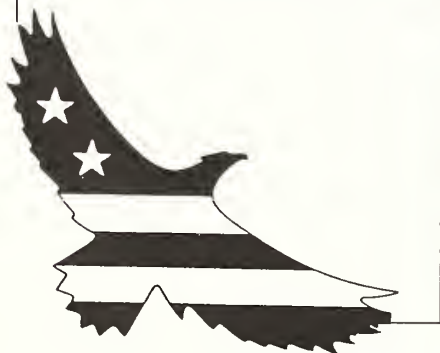
EXCERPT's data, namely regulations of the importing countries, will be maintained by the Export Certification unit's Rick Yoshimitsu. "We will be able to enter any changes in a country's entry requirements in the data base and make them available to users immediately," says Yoshimitsu. "It will be a great improvement from the inefficient and frustrating manuals we've used in the past."

## APHIS Offers Employees New Phone Services

By Ray Nosbaum,  
Work and Family Life Program

Effective June 1, APHIS is offering the services of The Partnership Group and The Dependent Care Connection. These phone services will provide customized referral and educational materials on child and adult care needs to employees in certain States. Employees in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming can call 1-800-847-5437 to learn more about the services offered; employees in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands can call 1-800-873-4636.

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## PPQ's New Video "America 2020"

By Doug Hendrix, Public Information, LPA

Imagine a future America without a healthy and abundant food supply; a time when people are forced to barter with food brokers for sparse and inferior food items.

"America 2020," PPQ's new 15-minute video, contemplates the impact pest and disease organisms could have on the American family if left unchecked to wreak havoc and

destroy our precious agricultural economy. The video also salutes the daily efforts of agricultural inspectors stationed at U.S. ports-of-entry to protect American agriculture. One thousand copies of the video are being produced for distribution to all PPQ work units and State, travel industry, and producer cooperators.



APHIS PHOTO BY LAURIE SMITH

A scene is being filmed to indicate what our food supply could be like in the future should harmful diseases and pests be allowed to enter this country—merely a means of survival.

# ADC Helps Dedicate Wildlife Damage Management Institute

By Robin Porter, Public Information, LPA

More than 500 people, including Acting APHIS Administrator Lonnie King and ADC Deputy Administrator Bobby Acord, attended a March 21 ceremony to honor retired U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service employee Jack H. Berryman and the institute established in his name. The dedication helped launch the 1993 North American Wildlife Conference.

In a keynote address to the group, Acord credited Berryman with having the vision and courage needed to help move the profession of wildlife damage management into the next century. "This is an exciting time for all of us," said Acord. "The new center will provide current and future wildlife professionals with the insight and foresight needed to tackle the challenges of tomorrow. It will also open up opportunities for research that will add to the understanding of wildlife damage management in the public, professional, and academic communities."

The Berryman Institute is in Utah State University's College of Natural Resources in Logan, UT, and is a cooperative effort between ADC and the university.



APHIS PHOTO BY LAURIE SMITH

ADC Deputy Administrator Bobby Acord (left) and Acting APHIS Administrator Lonnie King (right) congratulate Jack H. Berryman at the dedication of the Jack H. Berryman Institute for Wildlife Damage Management.

## All Around APHIS

### **New Associate Deputy of ADC—**

Donald W. Hawthorne has been named ADC's new Associate Deputy. For the past 4 years, Hawthorne served as the ADC Western Regional Director in Denver, CO. "His frontline work at every level of wildlife management and his sensitivity to constituents are what I value the most," says ADC Deputy Administrator Bobby Acord.

### **Foot-and-mouth Disease (FMD)—**

Italy has had to destroy 5,400 cattle, sheep, and goats due to FMD. On March 17, the European Community Commission closed the Italian border because of the outbreak. The initial case was caused by imported cattle from Croatia.

### **Africanized Honey Bees (AHB)—**

APHIS' AHB trap inspectors from Del Rio, TX, gave a presentation to the Del Rio Literacy Council on how to prevent stinging incidents and other general information about the bees. The presentation was so well received that several businesses, including Wal-Mart, McDonalds, Rio Grande Electric Cooperative, and a local Texas supermarket, have united to provide funding to reprint the AHB Awareness Pamphlet developed by Texas A&M and the Extension Service.

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